

Listing of Claims

1. (Currently amended) A motor vehicle (1) with a vehicle body in whose underbody area (2) ~~at least~~ two reinforcing struts (4, 5) are provided, each extending to a respective end (10, 11), wherein the ~~at least~~ two reinforcing struts (4, 5) are fixed to the vehicle body by the respective ends (10, 11), **characterized by** at least one retaining bridge (12) arranged indirectly or directly on the underbody (2) and extending beneath part of an exhaust system (15) for attachment of at least one of the struts (4, 5);

wherein the at least one retaining bridge (12) includes a center area (8) configured for holding the ~~at least~~ two reinforcing struts (4, 5);

wherein the retaining bridge (12) is positioned behind rear wheel wells (9) with respect to the direction of travel (F); and

at least one side attachment flange (13) positioned behind the center area (8), with respect to the direction of travel (F), such that the at least one side attachment flange (13) is attached to the underbody (2).

2. (Original) A motor vehicle (1) according to Claim 1, **characterized in that** the retaining bridge (12) passes beneath an end muffler (16) arranged essentially in the transverse center of the vehicle.

3. (Currently amended) A motor vehicle (1) according to Claim 1, **characterized in that** rear end areas (10, 11) of the two struts (4, 5) can be attached to the retaining bridge (12), which extend from there with one component in the direction of travel (F) and are attached at their front ends (6, 7) to the auto body.

4. (Previously presented) A motor vehicle (1) according to Claim 1, **characterized in that** the retaining bridge (12) lies at a vertical spacing several centimeters beneath said part of the exhaust system (15).

5. (Currently amended) A motor vehicle (1) according to Claim 1, **characterized in that the two struts (4, 5) can be attached to the retaining bridge (12) by screw connections.**

6. (Previously presented) A motor vehicle (1) according to Claim 1, **characterized in that the retaining bridge (12) can be attached to the auto body by screw connections.**

7. (Previously presented) A motor vehicle (1) according to Claim 1, **characterized in that the underbody (2) has a channel (18) extending upward in the underbody (2) for the exhaust system (15) and surfaces (14) of the auto body lying deeper with respect to it on both sides as attachment surfaces for the retaining bridge (12).**

8-17. (Cancelled)

18. (Previously presented) A motor vehicle (1) according to Claim 1, wherein the at least one attachment flange (13) is a pair of attachment flanges (13) that extend from opposing ends of the center area (8) in opposing directions.

19. (Previously presented) A motor vehicle (1) according to claim 18, wherein each of the attachment flanges (13) extend from the opposing ends of the center area (8) in a curved fashion such that the retaining bridge (12) is generally trapezoidal.

20. (Cancelled)

21. (Currently amended) A motor vehicle (1) according to claim 1, wherein the retaining bridge (12) includes two securing flanges (13) and, from these, together with the two struts (4, 5), an almost x-shaped shape.